

Hebrews 10: 30-39 – “Do not cast away your confidence”

Intro: What is the substance of the Christian hope and confidence? How is such a confidence tested and manifested in the world? How does the author of Hebrews encourage the church to persevere? How are warnings/admonishments parts of encouragement and discipline? How are the keys of the kingdom at work in the Christian message/proclamation and fellowship/discipline of the body?

- 1) The Christian hope and confidence involves seeking to escape the wrath to come - an understanding that perfect justice will ultimately prevail in God’s final judgment. The wrath of God, guilt, condemnation, and the reality of hell ought to strike ultimate fear/terror in the hearts of sinners. Everyone who will be saved will have known this fear/terror.
- 2) While all true believers have come to know the fear/terror of the Lord, not one of them shall be saved through merely fear/terror of His avenging wrath. The persuasion of the Christian gospel answers the wrath of God with the provision of mercy/grace/kindness of God’s love in Christ. Ultimately, sinners are saved by being enlightened by the loving kindness of God’s mercy/grace in Christ unto repentance and faith (law and gospel).
- 3) The Hebrew church is referred back to their gospel enlightenment and the witness that resulted thereof for encouragement. Such enlightenment provides the persuasion/apprehension, through faith, that in Christ we have an everlasting possession beyond this life. The substance of our hope and confidence anchors and orients the soul with an indomitable heavenly persuasion of glory that informs and overcomes any other earthly and temporal concern.
- 4) Such a persuasion/apprehension of our heavenly inheritance strengthens the believers in the midst of trials. Trials are meant to magnify, clarify, and refine our view and hope in this inheritance in the midst of temporal sufferings/temptations. Trials will refine, purify, and strengthen believers while driving others to apostasy or rejection of the faith.
- 5) The proclamation of such gospel truth/substance and the exhortation/warning/discipline to persevere and endure under the testing/temptation of affliction/sufferings are kingdom keys that God uses to open heaven for believers and close it for unbelievers. The church is warned against idolatry in the open unbelief/apostasy of those who reject the heavenly hope.
- 6) God’s warning/admonishment against casting off such a hope and confidence goes inextricably tied not only to our heavenly hope, but also to our heavenly family and fellowship. Believers’ encouragement in Christ involves:
 - a. identification with the church’s faith/confession;
 - b. identification with the church’s suffering;
 - c. identification with the church’s reproaches;
 - d. identification with the church’s needs;
 - e. identification with the church’s discipline;

Reflection: What is the substance/object of my faith? How’s it being tested amid the temporal vicissitudes of life? Is my faith and hope in Christ increasingly looking unto the eternal and heavenly amid trials and temptations? How is my faith/confidence/hope being challenged in a world that scorns and hates Christ and His bride? Am I becoming closer to God’s people in abiding life and service as I become closer and more dependent on my union with Christ?